

PEACE CONFERENCE AT BREST-LITOVSK IS DULY ASSEMBLED

Leopold Welcomes Delegates, von Kuehlman Chairman, Bol- sheviki Program Presented

WASHINGTON, December 24—(Associated Press)—Peace negotiations are under way at Brest-Litovsk reports from there by way of Copenhagen declare. On the contrary Petrograd reports tell of the departure of the Bolshevik delegates on their return home. The exact status of the situation is apparently a matter of some doubt, the Copenhagen despatches indicating that proceedings are going ahead while the Petrograd despatches indicate an unexplained hitch somewhere. The Petrograd reports were dated Friday while those from Brest-Litovsk were sent on Saturday and are given a greater credence.

PRINCE LEOPOLD WELCOMES DELEGATES

Peace negotiations were opened at Brest-Litovsk on Saturday, messages to Copenhagen declared and proceeded to give details of the opening meeting. Delegates from Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Russia and Turkey were present and were welcomed by Prince Leopold of Bavaria, commander of the forces of the east for the Kaiser.

After his address of welcome Prince Leopold suggested that Count von Kuehlmann be made chairman and he was unanimously selected. Rules of procedure were then adopted which provide that the debate shall be conducted in the German, Bulgarian, Russian and Turkish language, interpreters translating all of the remarks to the delegates in those languages.

BOLSHEVIKI PROGRAM PRESENTED

With rules of procedure adopted the chief Bolshevik delegate rose and in a long speech presented the Russian peace proposals which coincide closely with those promulgated some weeks since by the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council and support of which they demanded from Kerensky before he was deposed.

KAISER WOULD SUMMON RULERS

Despatches from the Kaiser which reached Copenhagen said that he had informed the government that if the diplomats would agree to the Russian peace proposals or such counter proposals as the present council might favor he would personally go to Brest-Litovsk and call for assembly there all of the sovereigns and regents of Europe to a peace conference similar to the one which followed the Napoleonic wars.

The Kaiser declared that everybody wants peace and that the future offers many great tasks in which all must cooperate.

Rumania is not credited with having sent any delegates to the conference and has possibly decided not to participate despite the fact that a Russian peace would leave Rumania geographically isolated from the other allies.

No subsequent details of the first session of the conference were given by the Copenhagen despatches.

PETROGRAD REPORT DIFFERS

Reports of the return of the Bolshevik delegates to the peace conference were received in London from Petrograd. They were dated Friday, the day before the Copenhagen reports say that the opening session was held at which those despatches report the Bolshevik program was presented. The Petrograd advices merely said that the delegates were returning but gave no reason and did not say that Germany had refused to consider the Bolshevik program. It made no mention whatever of any rejection of such program.

BOMB EXPLOSION IS CAUSE OF BAD FIRE

Four Workmen Die In Plant
Working on Government Contract

NEWARK, New Jersey, December 24—(Associated Press)—Four workmen were killed in a fire which followed an explosion yesterday in the plant of the Newark Rubber Company. The superintendent of the factory says that the explosion was caused by a bomb.

The company is working upon a large and important government contract. Immediately following the explosion the flames broke forth and spread rapidly. All of the workmen escaped except four, who were either trapped by the fire or overcome by the fumes.

Investigations have been started by the federal authorities.

GERMANY TO ANNEX

COURLAND REPORTED

WASHINGTON, December 24—(Associated Press)—Annexation of Courland by Germany is foreshadowed by despatches from Paris. It is reported that a delegation from the Courland Landtag has arrived in Berlin and that it will notify the German government that a closer relation is desired by the people whom they represent. This is to be taken as a request for annexation and the steps are then to be taken forthwith.

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SUBSIDIZED PAPER OBJECT OF ATTACK

Street Crowds at Buenos Aires
Seek To Wreck Plant To Which
Germany Contributed

BUENOS AIRES, December 24—(Associated Press)—Mounted troops had the utmost difficulty in preventing anti-German riots in the streets of the city on Saturday as the result of the further disclosures of German perfidy and von Luxburg's infamy while he was ambassador for Germany here. Especially was the crowd incensed against the newspaper which it is asserted was subsidized by Germany for the promulgation of pro-German news and articles published editorially.

Crowds of students and others marched the streets, displaying anti-German banners and placards and demanding government action in defense of the honor of the country. These crowds proceeded to the La Union Newspaper building, shouting as they went "Ten thousand pesos," the amount which it is asserted was paid by Germany through von Luxburg each month as a subsidy.

It was here especially that the mounted troops had their hardest work for it was the determination of the crowd to wreck its vengeance on the newspaper office and it had to be charged repeatedly before it was finally scattered.

TWO SOLDIERS ARE WASHED OVERBOARD

General Pershing Reports Accident and Deaths of Two
From Wounds

WASHINGTON, December 24—(Associated Press)—Two United States soldiers were washed overboard from a transport en route for France during a severe storm and consequent rough weather, General Pershing yesterday reported to the war department. These two soldiers were Corporal Samuel Keri of Pennsylvania, and Private William Smith of Chicago. General Pershing gives no details of the casualties beyond indicating that a severe storm was responsible for the accident.

Two other deaths were reported by General Pershing. These were Sergeant Grover Goodall, of Pennsylvania, and Corporal William Faustroy of Virginia. Both of them died of wounds which were received in action.

FEWER SHIPS SUNK ADMITS GERMANY

Official Statement Agrees With
Lloyd George But Denies
Submarine Failure

LONDON, December 24—(Associated Press)—Berlin admits that the number of sinkings that result from its submarine campaign is decreasing. The admission came yesterday in an official reply to the assertions made by Premier Lloyd George that the number of losses to Allied vessels was showing a decided loss.

While the Berlin official statement admits that a decrease is apparent it denies that the campaign is a failure, but on the contrary attributes the decrease to the earlier successes. The official report asserts that the decrease may be attributed to two causes. The first is that the tonnage has been greatly decreased and there are consequently fewer vessels that can be attacked, and many of these stay close to port. The second reason attributed is a greater showing of precautions on the part of the Allies.

TWO MORE NORWEGIAN SHIPS SUBMARINED

COPENHAGEN, December 24—(Associated Press)—Two more Norwegian vessels and a number of Norwegian lives have been taken by the German submarines, the Norwegian admiralty announces.

The steamer Lugrin was torpedoed and only five of her officers and crew escaped, the second officer and four sailors.

The Borgsten was also submarine and sunk, with two of her crew killed and the remainder saved.

Italy's New Leader a Libyan Hero

General Diaz, the new commander-in-chief of the Italian armies, has his forces in such shape that they have been able to repel enemy attacks and hold his established line firmly. General Diaz is rated as one of the ablest military leaders and he has been connected with the general staff for years. He took part in the Libyan war, serving as a colonel. He was wounded severely that he asked to be wrapped in a flag, fearing that his death was pending. He has rendered distinguished service in the present war. General Diaz is from Southern Italy.

NEW UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENT IS MAKING GAINS ON BOLSHEVIKI

All Odessa Passes Under New
Control and Entire Black Sea
Fleet Goes Over To the New,
Growing Power

TROOPS CONCENTRATE; BATTLES ARE EXPECTED

Chinese In Harbin Order Bolshe-
viki To Disarm and By Ulti-
matum Give Forty-eight Hours
To Leave City

LONDON, December 24—(Associated Press)—Growing strength of the newly organized Ukrainian Government and a weakening of the Bolshevik forces are indicated by all of the reports which come through from Russia. The Ukrainian forces have been augmented by the navy in the Black Sea and by considerable additions to the land forces as well. Successes are attending its arms.

TROOPS GATHER

Between Homel and Bakmatch the Ukrainian troops have been concentrated while the Bolsheviks are gathering near Minsk. They are preparing to resist advances of the Cossack forces which will follow the concentration now in progress.

General Verkhovski, who was war minister under Kerensky before the latter was deposed has offered his services to the Ukrainian government which now has complete control of Odessa.

Highly important is the addition of the Black Sea fleet which reports say has gone over to the Ukrainians to a man.

CITIES SURROUNDED

At Ufa the Cossack General Dutov suppressed the Bolshevik organization and continued his advance. Simafra, Saratov and Orenburg are reported to have been surrounded by the Cossacks.

In Petrograd chaotic conditions continue. Looting of the wine cellars goes on with drunkenness the common and general result. Machine guns were used in the streets in the efforts to suppress rioting. Shops, dwelling houses and the home of the Danish Red Cross were looted.

CHINA AT HARBIN

There are indications that a clash between China and the Bolshevik element and forces in Harbin is imminent. On Friday, Peking reports, an ultimatum was delivered by the commandant of the Chinese forces that the Bolsheviks must disarm and they were given forty-eight hours within which to leave the city.

The Chinese continue to increase their military forces there and in this they are assisted by the Russian military commander, General Horvath, who has taken up his residence in the area which is controlled by the Chinese.

WOMAN IS SELECTED A DEPUTY COLLECTOR

Miss Minnie Rudebeck was yesterday appointed a deputy collector of internal revenue and stenographer in the office of Col. Howard Hathaway, the new collector. Miss Rudebeck has been the colonel's stenographer at Everett, Washington, for the past fifteen years. Colonel Hathaway yesterday morning took over the office from Acting Collector Ralph Johnstone, the transfer being made by W. W. Anderson, revenue agent, who came here from San Francisco for the purpose. Colonel Hathaway then reappointed the entire staff. Mr. Johnstone, however, retires immediately to form a partnership with Mr. Cameron, formerly with the same office, as tax experts.

DESTRUCTION OF LARGE CONTAINERS MENACE TO HARBOR

Would Probably Set Fire To
Wharves and Shipping

Repeated warnings of fire danger from oil storage tanks that have been given by the authorities to the Union and Associated Oil companies have had no tangible result, and the menace to property and shipping in the district where the great tanks are located continues to exist.

In what the Standard Oil company has done to lessen danger of widespread conflagration the two companies against which complaints have been directed have an ample of what should be done and to investigators who have studied the area in which the storage tanks are located it is apparent that all the work the Standard Oil company has done to erect safeguards is in large measure nullified by the negligence of the other two companies.

Big Storage Capacity
Not counting the smaller so-called measuring tanks, all in there are twelve large oil tanks all located in an area of less than ten acres bordering the Twelfth roadway and a scant 500 yards from the waters of the harbor. The aggregate capacity of the tanks is something like 350,000 barrels.

The tract occupied by the Standard Oil company is on the makai side of the road, farthest from other property that borders the area and also farthest from the harbor, or from that part of the harbor that would be endangered in the event of a conflagration. The Standard oil tanks have an approximate capacity of 120,000 barrels. Two of the large tanks, each with a capacity of 35,000 barrels, are used for crude oil. Another large tank, with a capacity of 27,000 barrels, is used to store kerosene. Two smaller tanks, one of 14,000 barrels and one of 9,000 barrels are used to store distillate and gasoline.

Tanks Enclosed
All of these tanks of the Standard Oil company are enclosed in a concrete wall, all save one spot where an earthen embankment that serves as a wall has been thrown up. The whole force of employees has been trained into a fire fighting organization by the frequent fire drills that are held and that are called by the ringing of a bell without previous notice. Disaster here very likely would be confined to the small enclosed area in which the tanks stand.

The danger to the district lies across the road along which, behind an inadequate barrier, stand the great tanks of the Union and Associated Oil companies. Nearest the harbor waters are the three tanks of the Associated Oil company which have an approximate capacity of 100,000 barrels. Farther along the road are the four tanks of the Union Oil company with an approximate capacity of 120,000 barrels. It is stated that all the tanks of both companies are used for the storage of crude oil.

Danger Is Present

Honolulu harbor with its shipping and wharves alike is a possible outcome of any serious disaster to the tanks of the Union and Associated Oil companies. In answer to notices that have been sent to these companies by Acting Superintendent of Public Works Hobbs, the companies have temporized. The Associated Oil company has urged that its lease on the tract it occupies is short, but the lease in question has a matter of two years to run and the danger is present every day. In answer to complaints, the Union Oil company has stated that the matter has been taken up with its home office in California. When the company's officials will act or what they may elect to do, so far has not yet been disclosed. In the midst of recent evacuation from the public works department it is stated that the present condition cannot be permitted to continue. It has not been stated what action is contemplated.

Destruction of one or more of the tanks of the two companies would probably spread destruction in two directions. On the makai side are the lumber yards and mill of the City Mill Company and on beyond this the plant of the Hawaiian Fertilizer company and a hundred yards on at the foot of a slope the gas company's plant and storage tank.

The greatest menace, however, lies in the other direction. The asphalt which borders the tank slopes gently toward Pier 15 and the other piers beyond, a perfect channel down which destruction might flow to the shipping, moored at the piers. Less seriously menaced is the drydock plant of the Inter Island at the end of a short roadway.

The basis of protection that has been erected around the group of all tanks consists of a board fence. That part of the fence that runs along the roadway is sheathed in metal, but the greater portion of the fence is of wood. The single purpose it serves is to keep people out. It could not have been designed for any other purpose. Watchmen are maintained around the two plants and "No Smoking" signs are to be seen on all sides but a holocaust would not be stayed by these things.

DANIELS RECOMMENDS EXTRA PAY FOR MEN

WASHINGTON, December 24—(Associated Press)—Secretary Daniels today recommended to congress that officers and men of the navy and marine corps doing extra work in Santo Domingo be allowed to receive pay from the republic in addition to their regular pay. No details accompanied the recommendation.

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Promises Food From Russia To Austrians

Food Minister Tells Vienna
Relief Is In Sight and May
Be Expected By March

AMSTERDAM, December 24—(Associated Press)—Food supplies from Russia have been promised to the people at Vienna. This statement is credited to von Hofner, the Austrian food minister in a despatch which reached here last night from Vienna. He is reported to have issued a statement that the food supply for Vienna and all Austria would shortly be improved by the shipment of stores from Russia with which country a peace agreement was pending.

Berlin, Vienna and Budapest, he said, are all rushing their transportation facilities. The Danube will be frozen soon but he does not expect that supplies can be brought through in wholesale quantities until March.

In Berlin the Vorwarts, a Socialist newspaper, has been ordered to suspend publication for three days because it recently published an attack upon the food control policies which were employed by the government.

CHIEF OF SECRET SERVICE WILL QUIT

William Flynn Will End Twenty
Years Work, Five As Chief,
Because Breakdown Is Near

NEW YORK, December 24—(Associated Press)—After twenty years of almost continuous service in the United States secret service, of which he has been chief since 1912, William James Flynn is leaving that branch of the government this week he announces.

Flynn yesterday said that the reports that he was to retire were correct. He added that he had tendered his resignation to take effect in November but that he had been asked to reconsider. He said it was impossible for him to withdraw his resignation.

In explaining his reasons for retiring, he said that in response to the advice of his physician and the urging of his family he had reached his determination. Physicians had told him that a breakdown for him was imminent unless he got away from the nervous and mental strain of the work of his office very speedily.

Chief of the Secret Service Flynn has been connected with that branch of the government since 1897 with the exception of a period of six months in late 1910 and early 1911 when he reorganized the New York police force. He has been chief since December 15, 1912. He was fifty years of age November 18.

GERMAN SPY KILLED AT MEXICO BORDER

Ground Plans of Troop Camps
and Fortifications Found on
Man Shot By Patrols

EL PASO, December 24—(Associated Press)—Charles Feige who, all the evidence indicates, was a German spy, was shot and killed yesterday by army patrols as he sought to cross into Mexico. When his body was searched there were found upon him papers that appeared to indicate clearly that he was a spy. Among the papers were ground plans of troop camps and fortifications. He also carried a camera.

When Feige was seen by the army patrols approaching the international line he was ordered to halt but failed to obey and quickened his pace. No heed was paid to a second order whereupon the patrols fired and Feige dropped dead a few yards from the safety which Mexico would have afforded him.

RED CROSS DRIVE IS MAKING FINE SUCCESS

WASHINGTON, December 24—(Associated Press)—Good success is attending the Red Cross Christmas drive. Up to Saturday night reports received from the country. It is believed the results thus far are considerably in excess of those figures.

BEET TOPS CAUSE DEATH OF CATTLE

FORT LUPKIN, Colorado, December 24—(Associated Press)—Poisoning of horses and cattle by oxalic acid contained in beet tops is responsible for the recent losses to farmers in this section, according to Dr. B. Duffy, veterinarian, who has been investigating the mysterious deaths of cattle. Plots to kill the cattle and reduce the meat supply have been rumored.

The effect of the oxalic acid on cattle, according to Dr. Duffy is to paralyze the muscles of the legs and render the cattle unable to stand.

HUN POSITION IS PRECARIOUS WITH WEATHER GROWING WORSE

Must Break Through To Plains
Or Thousands Will Perish of
Hardships of Winter in Mountain Passes

FORCES ARE MASSES TO MAKE ANOTHER EFFORT

Turks Are Scattered In Patches
into Small Guerrilla Bands
and Several Towns Around
Jerusalem Captured

NEW YORK, December 24—(Associated Press)—In a precarious position unless they are able to break through to the Bassano Plains, the Austro-Germans are concentrating their troops heavily before Monte Asolone from which they were driven last Friday by the strong Italian counters. Monte Asolone dominates Monte Grappa and is admittedly the key to the situation. A vigorous onslaught by the enemy is expected soon.

Here the Italian positions are backed by a rejuvenated army, thoroughly reorganized and re-equipped, reinforced by others of their own countrymen and by their French and British Allies. They are full of confidence in their ability to hold these positions but look forward to a period of intense fighting.

PLIGHT TERRIBLE

The severity of the winter weather, the storms of snow and sleet, the nights of intense cold following days of wearying battles and discomfort are increasing the difficulties of the Austro-Germans. They must break through to the Bassano Plains or thousands must perish of cold, privations and disease. The plight is already terrible as told in the stories of prisoners who were taken in the recent Italian victory at Monte Asolone. The condition in which these prisoners were found gives full substantiation to the tales which they related of hardship, privation and suffering.

The initiative in the Italian Front is entirely in the hands of General Diaz.

On all of the fronts yesterday there was a lull in hostilities and the fighting was below the normal. In Belgium and in France the engagements consisted merely of outpost encounters and bombardments.

AIR RAID FAILS

Saturday night an air raid on the coast cities of England with an effort to reach London was undertaken by the Huns. One airship was brought down near London and official reports of yesterday said that there were no casualties and that the damage occasioned was of minor importance.

PALESTINE CAMPAIGN

From Palestine General Allenby reported the taking of Keurbur, Hasrach, Sheik Muanis, Keir Lekket, El Makhiras and Raj el Zandy, towns to the north and east of Jerusalem.

Following his taking of Jerusalem the Turkish troops scattered and have since been conducting a guerrilla warfare against the British outposts. The British commander, to check these raids by small parties of the enemy ordered that the ridges to the north and east of the city should be cleared. This was done, scores of Turks were captured and other small bodies were put to rout and these towns were taken in such encounters.

STEAMSHIP REPORTED TORPEDOED IS SAFE

ATLANTIC PORT, December 24—(Associated Press)—The British Steamship City of Naples, which was reported to have been torpedoed, has arrived here safely. Instead of having met attack from a submarine she had struck a mine and was forced to return to port. The damages which she suffered are negligible and can be repaired without removing the cargo to enter dry dock.